



The contribution of VET student placement to innovation in host organisations — support document

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Overview

This document gathers material used in the research project *The contribution of VET student placement to innovation in host organisations* that were not presented in the main report. The Support Document includes research instruments (interview schedules and survey content), a summary of the research methodology and text developed for an Australian VET Research Association (AVETRA) 2016 conference presentation on conceptions of innovation.

Methodology

The project sought to explore the question, What is the contribution of the VET student placement process to innovation in host organisations? Specific questions identified initially were:

- How does the process of student placement reflect and contribute to the openness of host firms to new skills, knowledge and attitudes?
- What role do placement students play in promoting innovation in host firms?
- How do competencies learned in formal VET transfer into host firms?
- What role do staff from training providers play in promoting innovation in host firms?
- What are the features of the student placement process as a whole that contribute to innovation?
- What are some examples where the student placement process has demonstrably contributed to innovation and how did this innovation come about?

Since there was no direct research into the key question to build on, the project adopted an exploratory stance. Previous research provided some conceptual and theoretical structure for the project, but at an empirical level the absence of precedents prompted the researchers to develop a multi-faceted design, gathering a range of data types and drawing on multiple sources. The design also incorporated different phases that would allow later phases to be modified in response to findings from earlier phases, allowing the project to 'learn' and adapt over its life. The three phases were (i) interviews with training provider staff, VET placement students and host organisation staff accessed through their involvement in specific VET program areas, (ii) a survey of host organisations, and (iii) a set of case studies based on host organisations. The research was thus a mixed methods design with some scope for redesign and adaptation. Mixed methods research is promoted as a design that combines the strengths of qualitative and quantitative data for complex research questions (Creswell, 2014). The dominant method within the mixed methods design was the case study approach employed in Phase 3. Literature on research design identifies the case study as an approach that allows complex phenomena to be investigated in context (Yin, 2014). This involved development of a number of case studies. The use of multiple cases is acknowledged as

a way to overcome potential shortcomings of the case study approach and produce more generalizable findings (Stake, 2005). Details of the three phases are presented below.

The rationale of the research design was that Phase 1 would produce some 'orientation' to the problem. By talking with key stakeholders directly involved in VET student placement it was assumed that some initial indications would be identified to allow more targeted questioning and methods to be implemented through the project. Analysis and reflection on Phase 1 data did provided the researchers with guidance for the construction of a survey to help identify possible case study sites for Phase 3. The Phase 2 survey reflects learning from Phase 1, with the survey constructed guided by a set of assumptions that are set out in the Findings chapter below. The Phase 2 survey was intended to highlight examples of host organisations that had a positive approach to the VET student placement process that might be connected with innovative behaviour on the part of the organisation. Based on the results of the survey, case study sites would be recruited that would give the researchers the opportunity to examine the VET student placement process in settings where it would be most likely to contribute to innovation. The survey results did identify examples of host organisations that expressed positive attitudes to VET placement students and case studies were undertaken based on the survey results.

Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee approval for the project was sought with approval granted on 5 November, 2015 (Griffith University Ref No: 2015/826). All Phase 1 and 3 interview participants were provided an information sheet and completed a consent form.

Phase 1: Program-based interviews

Training providers, both public and private, were approached to facilitate recruitment and directly participate in the research. From the provider perspective the most obvious way to look at VET student placement was in terms of specific programs and it was decided the most effective structure for the Phase 1 interviews would be to take programs - particular qualifications - as the basis. The programs that provided the platform for the Phase 1 interviews were:

- Diploma in Community Services
- Certificate III in Hospitality
- Certificate III in Carpentry
- Certificate III in Metal Fabrication
- Certificate II in Electrical (Career Start)

With substantial help from providers, host organisations were approached and recruited. Interviews were held with staff from the following organisations:

- a high school
- a disability services provider
- an events management organisation
- a home building and renovation company

- an engineering company
- a metal fabrication company
- two electrical services companies
- a hotel

In total, 41 people were interviewed for Phase 1: 13 host organisation staff, 11 provider staff and 17 students.

Phase 2: Survey of host organisations

The main focus of the research was the final phase of case studies. How to select the cases was a significant challenge in the design that was resolved using a survey. The survey questions were developed through analysis and reflection on the data from the Phase 1 interviews. A set of assumptions was formulated that guided development of the survey questions.

The 46-item survey included items seeking information about the nature of the organisation, kinds of innovation recognised and pursued, and understanding of the concept of innovation. Combining data from these items and those from the items specifically designed to serve the selection and recruitment process was expected to provide a useful overview of organisational types and their views on innovation and student placement.

The survey was developed by the researchers in consultation with Associate Professor Sama Low-Choy, a statistics specialist employed by the University's Griffith Social and Behavioural Research College (GSBRC). Through these consultations, the survey was developed in a way that would allow sophisticated statistical analyses. In particular, question phrasing, data types and assumptions were clarified to facilitate later analysis. With GSBRC input, a refined draft of the survey was formatted for the LimeSurvey online survey platform (maintained by Griffith University for staff and student use). This survey was trialled with a small number of employers and academics unconnected with the research. A number of refinements were made as a result. The refined survey was then sent to NCVET for review, and based on feedback further refinements were made.

The training providers involved in Phase 1 agreed to distribute the survey to host organisations on their databases, and additional providers (public and private) were invited to distribute the survey. Thirty six organisations completed the survey and of these, 17 agreed to be contacted for follow up interviews.

Phase 3: Case studies

The survey results indicated a number of organisations that were positive about the VET student placement process. Most of these organisations also consented to follow up by the researchers and a number of organisations were contacted for initial discussions. Seven organisations were short-listed for case study sites, three of which were selected for in-depth case studies.

The selection of organisations took into account not only specific responses from the survey but an interest in capturing a range of industries. The seven candidates were:

- A community service provider
- A private hospital
- A large hotel
- A special education service unit
- An aged care facility
- An early learning centre
- A hospitality services provider

Three case studies are presented in this report, being the special education unit, the early learning centre and the hospitality services provider.

The case studies are presented in detail in the next chapter and based on analysis of data from these cases some tentative answers to research questions are formulated in the Discussion chapter. A set of recommendations are framed based on reflection on the whole project. They are presented in the last part of the report.

Research instruments

Phase 1 interview schedules

NCVER – Contribution of student placement to innovation

Questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule

Placement details:

Student M/F – Age Duration
.....

Qualification Stage of progress
.....

Occupation

Previous placements Y/N

Details
.....
.....

Employer/Host

Paid/Unpaid – PT/FT

Site..... Size
.....

Support personnel
.....

Practice
.....
.....

Placement Organisation/RTO

.....

Details/circumstances
.....

Student

Section A – placement enactment and experience

1. Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you came to be doing this placement and this course
2. How would you describe your placement experience –
 - a. From a personal perspective
 - b. From professional perspective
 - c. From a learning perspective
3. In what ways has this placement impressed and or surprised you (or not)
4. How would you describe any differences between your course practices and your work practices through the placement
5. How would you describe any differences between your expectations of the placement and its actualities
6. What kinds of changes have you noticed or experienced through this placement
 - a. In yourself
 - b. In the organisation
 - c. In your practice
 - d. In your colleagues
7. What have been the primary sources of and or reasons for these changes
8. In what ways have you been able to contribute to these changes
 - a. Directly (through your own actions and initiative)
 - b. Indirectly (as your response to altered circumstances)
9. How have others responded to your contributions
10. How would you evaluate these changes - yours and in general

Generally speaking –

11. What kinds of differences (positive or negative) have you noticed in the ways things are done since you started your placement
12. Who or what would you say has generated these differences
13. What kinds of improvements have you noticed

Section B – Innovation and past experiences

1. Can you tell us a little about your involvement in and experience of any innovative practices from your previous placements or work-learning
2. What was it that made these particularly 'innovative'
3. What do you understand by the term 'innovation' – what does it mean for you

Employer/host/workplace (various personnel)

Section A – placement practices and experience

1. Can you tell us a little about the organisation and how and why it came to be accepting placement students and what it expects from the experience
 - a. What kinds of things would you say characterise an effective placement experience for the organisation
 - b. In what ways have these characteristics been realised (or not) in this placement
 - c. What kinds of improvements have taken place
2. How would you describe the placement experience –
 - a. From your personal perspective
 - b. From the organisation's perspective
 - c. From a student perspective
 - d. From an RTO perspective
3. In what ways has or does placement impressed and or surprised you (or not)
4. Can you tell us about any cases or instances where there have been exceptional (weak and strong) placement students and or experiences
 - a. What made these stand out as exceptional
 - b. What resulted from these exceptional cases or instances
5. What kinds of changes have you noticed or experienced through this placement
 - a. In yourself
 - b. In the organisation
 - c. In the occupational practice
 - d. In colleagues and co-workers
6. What have been the primary sources of and or reasons for these changes
7. In what ways has the placement practice contributed to these changes
8. How have others responded to these contributions
9. How would you evaluate these changes - yours and in general

Generally speaking –

10. What kinds of differences (positive or negative) have you noticed in the ways things are done since the placement started
11. Who or what would you say has generated these differences

Section B – Innovation and past experiences

1. Can you tell us a little about the organisation's involvement in and experience of any innovative practices from your previous placements
2. What was it that made these particularly 'innovative'
3. What do you understand by the term 'innovation' – what does it mean for you and for the organisation

Placement Agency / RTO

Section A – Placement practices and experience

1. Can you tell us a little about this organisation, how it goes about placing students and what it expects from the experience
2. How would you describe the placement process and experience –
 - a. From your personal/professional perspective
 - b. From the host organisation's perspective
 - c. From the student's perspective
3. In what ways has the placement process and or its outcomes impressed and or surprised you (or not)
4. Can you tell us about any cases or instances where there have been exceptional (weak and strong) placement students and or experiences
 - a. What made these stand out as exceptional
 - b. What resulted from these exceptional cases or instances
5. What kinds of changes have you noticed or experienced through the placement process and its management
 - a. In yourself and the organisation
 - b. In the placement practice
 - c. In your colleagues
 - d. In host employers
 - e. In placement students
6. What have been the primary sources of and or reasons for these changes
7. In what ways have you been able to contribute to and or manage these changes
8. How have others (students, employers, etc.) responded to these changes
9. How would you evaluate these changes

Generally speaking –

10. What kinds of differences (positive or negative) have you noticed in the ways things are done since the placement started
11. Who or what would you say has generated these differences
12. What kinds of things would you say characterise an effective placement experience
13. Thinking of any specific instances of recent or memorable placements - in what ways have these characteristics been realised (or not)
14. In what ways has the placement process improved
15. How would you say the placement process and its outcomes had led to improvements for your employer/host organisations

Section B – Innovation and past experiences

1. Can you tell us a little about the organisation's involvement in and experience of any innovative practices from your previous placements
2. What was it that made these particularly 'innovative'
3. What do you understand by the term 'innovation' – what does it mean for you and for the organisation

Phase 2 Survey

Introduction: This survey is designed to understand vocational education and training (VET) student placement in businesses and organisations. The survey should be completed by employers or staff in organisations that accept student placements from training providers. Work placement students are not paid employees and DO NOT include apprentices or trainees. In the survey we refer to both businesses and organisations as 'organisations' to save time. We are interested in learning how organisations arrange student placements, how they value student placement, how they understand innovation, and what links they believe there are between innovation and the student placement process. Training providers can be TAFE institutes or private providers. Ideally, the person completing this survey will be directly involved with the student placement process.

By responding to this survey you consent to share the information supplied. However, any identifying information (e.g. organisation names, personal details) included in your responses will be treated as confidential. No reports, publications or presentations of the results of this survey will contain information that could identify any organisation or individual, even if such information is supplied in your responses. You are welcome to contact the researchers responsible for this survey. Contact Steven Hodge at Griffith University on 0421224474 or s.hodge@griffith.edu.au, or Ray Smith on 0417606862 or raymond.smith@griffith.edu.au. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of this research project you should contact the Manager, Research Ethics on 0737354375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Part A: The first part of the survey is about your organisation, partnerships with training providers and the student placement process.			
#	Question	Response types	
1	What is the industry area of your organisation?	Select one or more: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing/Mining/Manufacturing/Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services/Construction/Wholesale Trade/Retail Trade/Accommodation and Food Services/Transport, Postal and Warehousing/Information Media and Telecommunications/Finance and Insurance Services/Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services/Professional, Scientific and Technical Services/Administrative and Support Services/Public Administration and Safety/Education and Training/Healthcare and Social Assistance/Arts and Recreation Services/Other Services	
2	How many states or countries does your business operate in?	Select one: One state ___(drop down box)/Several states in Australia/Australia and other countries	
3	Estimate how long has your organisation been established?	Select one: Less than one year/More than one year: _____ (type number)/Not sure	
4	How many employees are there in your organisation in Australia?	Select one: No employees/1-19 employees/20-199 employees/200+ employees	
5	How many employees are there in your organisation in total (if a multi-national organisation)?	Select one: No employees/1-19 employees/20-199 employees/200+ employees	
6	Does your organisation accept work placement students? (Work placement students are not paid employees and DO NOT include apprentices or trainees.)	Select one: Yes/Yes, but not currently/No, but planning to/No	Conditional: If No, but planning to, or No, then go straight to thank you screen.
7	What is your role in the organisation? (Job title or brief description)	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
8	How involved are you personally with the student placement process in your organisation?	Select one: Meet students every day/Meet students at least once a week/Meet students once in the placement/Rarely or never personally meet the students	

9	Where do your placement students come from?	Select one or more: High School/TAFE/Private Training Provider/University/Other [500 characters]	
10	Estimate how long your organisation has accepted VET student placements? (VET student placements are from TAFEs, private training providers and students from high schools studying VET qualifications)	Type number of years: /Not sure	
11	Has the number of VET student placements increased over time?	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
12	Estimate how many VET students your organisation took in the last five years (2011 - 2016).	Select one: 1-4/5-10/11-20/21-50/51+	
13	Over the last 12 months, what is the level(s) of study of VET students placed in your organisation? Select one or more.	Select one or more: Pre-vocational (initial training for transition into work)/Certificate I-IV/Diploma-Advanced Diploma/Not sure	
14	On a scale from 10 (= highly important) to 0 (= not important) rate how important is VET student placement to your organisation?	Select one: 0/1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10	
15	How would you rank these benefits from 1 (most important to the organisation) down to 5 (least important)?	Place in rank order: Cost effective labour/Source of recruitment/Gives the organisation more flexibility/Increases productivity/Enhances staff performance	
16	Would you recommend VET student placements to other organisations or to other units in your own organisation?	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
17	Over the last five years, has your organisation gone on to employ former VET placement students?	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
18	If yes, approximately how many?	Type number or estimate percentage	

19	Over the last 12 months, estimate the age range(s) of the VET students placed in your organisation.	Select one or more: 15-19/20-24/25 and above	
20	What is the age range of the VET students that would be <i>preferred</i> in your organisation?	Select one: 15-19/20-24/25 and above	
21	How easy is the process of getting VET placement students for your organisation?	Always easy/Mostly easy/Varies/Mostly difficult/Always difficult	
22	How formal (structured with detailed requirements) are the VET student placement arrangements in your organisation?	Highly formal/Mostly formal/Some formal aspects/Mostly informal/Highly Informal	
23	Does your organisation have written agreements with training providers?	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
24	What are the supervision arrangements for VET students?	Select one or more: Formal induction process/Written policy/Students are buddied with one staff member throughout placement/Students are rotated to different sections/staff during the placement/other [500 characters]	
25	Is much known about individual VET students on arrival? This question refers to skills, knowledge, experience, special qualities or needs, etc.	Very little/Some/Varies/A useful amount/A lot	
26	How much do staff learn about the VET students during the placement?	A lot/A reasonable amount/Varies/Little/Nothing/Not sure	
27	In what ways do VET students contribute to your organisation?	Select one or more: enable additional work to be undertaken/reduce workload of existing staff/bring fresh energy/bring new ideas/ generate new opportunities/identify problems with processes/reduce costs/potential new staff member/create new problems/they do not contribute/other [500 characters]	

28	Which of these is the most important to your organisation?	Rank in order of contribution, with 1 as the greatest contribution: bring fresh energy/bring new ideas/create new problems/generate new opportunities/identify problems with processes/reduce costs/potential new staff member/other [500 characters]	
29	On average, how long do VET students spend in your organisation?	Select one only: Less than one week/1-2 weeks/2-4 weeks/longer than 4 weeks	
30	Over the past 12 months, how many training providers (TAFEs and/or private providers) have placed students in your organisation?	Type number	
31	What is your organisation relationship with these training providers?	Select one or more: training partner co-delivery/training partner assessment/RTO actively screens and selects suitable students/RTO is like a recruitment agency/RTO trains staff in the organisation/Other [500 characters]	
32	How could these relationships be developed further to benefit your organisation?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
33	Over the last 12 months, to what extent have external training provider staff (trainers, placement officers, etc.) helped to improve your organisation?	Select one only: They haven't contributed to improvement/Not sure/They have contributed to some extent/They have definitely contributed to improvement	.
<p>Part B: The second part of the survey asks about 'innovation' in your organisation and how the VET student placement process does or doesn't contribute to innovation. In this survey, 'Innovation' means obvious improvement to processes, services or products. We understand innovation in a broad way to include improvement to processes in the organisation or to the services or products provided by the organisation.</p>			
34	Which of these improvements relate to your organisation? For each of the improvements that do relate to your organisation, rate how likely they are to occur.	Planned improvements in organisational systems and processes; Creating new organisational systems and processes; Incidental improvements in organisational systems and processes; Planned improvements in service delivery for customers and clients; Creating new services for customers and clients; Incidental improvements in service delivery for customers and clients; Planned improvement of products; Creating new products; Incidental improvement of products; other (please specify) [500 characters]	For each type of improvement, a question: Relates to your organisation? Y/N/Not sure + question How likely? Rate with numerical scale: 5/4/3/2/1 (5=highly likely/1=rare) Conditional: the numerical scale will appear only if the respondent selects 'Yes' for a

			particular statement.
35	How do you define innovation?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
36	On a scale from 10 (= very active) to 1 (= not active), how active would you rate your organisation's efforts to find new ideas?	Select one: 10/9/8/7/6/5/4/3/2/1	
37	In your organisation, where do ideas for improvements come from?	Select one or more: personal contacts/industry networking/discussion and/or presentations from suppliers/reading industry literature/research and development activities/staff suggestions/partnerships/other (please specify) [500 characters]	
38	In your organisation, who initiates innovation?	Select one or more: The head of the organisation/Leadership/senior management team/Workers/The combined efforts of workers and managers/Specially designated people or units (e.g. R&D, project teams)/Clients/customers/Suppliers/Competitors/External regulatory authorities (compliance)/External regulatory authorities (incentives)/Industry experts/Social and cultural change/other (please specify) [500 characters]	
39	In your organisation are workers actively encouraged to suggest improvements? Suggestions can be either casual ideas through to written submissions.	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
40	Do you provide opportunities for VET placement students to make suggestions for improvement to your organisation?	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
41	Is it possible that the VET student placement process contributes to improvement in your organisation? The placement process includes the students as well as interactions with training provider staff.	Select one: Yes/No/Not sure	
42	(Optional question) In what ways could the VET student placement process be improved?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	

43	(Optional question) In what ways could innovation be boosted in your organisation?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
44	(Optional question) What changes to the VET student placement process would lead to more innovation in your organisation?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
45	(Optional question) What changes in your organisation would increase the chances that VET student placement would lead to innovation?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
46	(Optional question) Any other comments or suggestions?	Open answer [1,500 characters]	
	Thank you for taking the time to answer our questions. The next stage of the project involves exploring some of these questions in more detail. Would you be willing to talk more about VET student placement and innovation with the project leaders? If yes, please provide contact details	Email address and/or phone number	

Phase 3 interview schedules

Questions for employers/staff

1. Background

- Job title
- Brief description of role
- Involvement with placement students - how extensive (e.g. little or no involvement, once per placement, regular)

2. Placement students and the organisation/business

- Describe the ways placement students contribute to the organisation/business.
- In your view, for this organisation/business, what is the preferred or ideal profile of a placement student? (e.g. age, experience, attitudes, knowledge, etc.)
- What does the organisation/business do, if anything, to ensure it gets students that fit this profile?
- How would you rate the knowledge and skills of placement students? Is their knowledge adequate? Does their knowledge ever seem to provide fresh insights into how the organisation/business runs?
- Do you think placement students feel welcome to make suggestions for improvement to the organisation/business? (e.g. improvements to processes or products or services)
- What are the conditions and circumstances that encourage and or hinder students' contributions to organisational improvement?
- What kind of placement student do you think would be more likely to make suggestions for improvement?
- Do placement students ever make suggestions for improvements? If so, what are some examples?
- Do you know of cases where suggestions have been made and they have lead to improvements? If so, please describe one or more examples.
- What kinds of things (student and organisational) would need to change to enable/promote student suggestions for improvement?

3. Innovation

- What does 'innovation' mean to you?
- In your opinion is this organisation/business innovative? Why or why not?

- In what ways could it be more innovative?

Questions for Students

1. Background

- Course studying
- Age
- Prior work experience
- Previous qualifications
- Length of placement/hours per day

2. Seeing possible improvements

- In this workplace, do you ever see ways to improve things?
 - How things are done?
 - How things are made [if appropriate]?
 - Services provided?
- Can you see any ways things could be improved here? Please describe.
- If you do see ways to improve things, why is that?
 - Because you have experience in other workplaces?
 - Because you have learned things at your training provider?
 - Because...?
- If you do see ways to improve things, are you the kind of person who likes to have ideas about improvements?

3. Suggesting improvements

- If you see a possible improvement to make, how would you make it happen?
 - Is there someone you would approach?
 - Is there a suggestion box or some other way that ideas like yours are collected?

- Would you keep it to yourself?
- If you see a possible improvement to make, would you feel confident about talking with someone here about it?
 - Do you feel you would be welcome or respected to make a suggestion?
 - Do you think other workers would feel confident to make a suggestion?
 - Does this workplace feel like they would be happy for placement students to make suggestions for improvements?

4. Making improvements

- Have you helped to make an improvement here?
 - Describe the improvement
 - Where did the idea for the improvement come from?
 - Who was involved?
 - Was the idea accepted or was it difficult to make people see why it was a good idea?
 - Were you nervous about making the suggestion?

5. Other students

- Have any other placement students here had ideas for improvements? If so, please describe.

6. Innovation

- What does 'innovation' mean to you?
- In your opinion is this organisation/business innovative? Why or why not?
- In what ways could it be more innovative?

Presentation text: Conceptions of innovation

Based on analysis of definitions of innovation provided by VET placement students, RTO staff and host organisation staff, six 'conceptions of innovation' have been identified by comparing interview data. These conceptions are:

- Difference is valued
- Ceaseless striving
- Measureable better
- Ideational
- Market oriented
- Integrated

Each of these conceptions is defined with illustrations from research participants.

Difference is valued

Sitting behind and within understandings about innovation is the assumption, the implicit expectation, that change is always good. To change practice is to improve – we wouldn't do it if it wasn't beneficial.

- I think it's doing something differently, in a new way, new ideas, changes, just looking at different ways of doing things (host staff)
- it's about doing something differently, defining a point of difference or creating something (RTO staff)
- We enjoy experimenting and doing things that haven't been done before (host staff)

Ceaseless striving

A dissatisfaction with the current and or an acceptance that things are never as good as they could be drives the need of finding how improvement can be accomplished.

- Always looking to improve and do something in a better way (host staff)
- it's continuous improvement. Anything that actually keeps us moving forward .. continually getting better at what we do (host staff)
- always thinking and challenging the norm or the status quo (RTO staff)
- Always trying new products...new materials and new techniques (host staff)

Measureable better

Better is measurable – faster, easier, more efficient, safer, cheaper, newest, most modern, etc.

- this is how everyone's doing it – how can we do it better? (host staff)
- it really means just finding ways to do a job faster (student)
- trying to do something easier or less waste (student)
- better machinery, better technology (RTO staff)

- change for the better (RTO staff)
- a more efficient product that's coming out there (RTO staff)
- Saving people money .. making them more efficient in themselves (host staff)

Ideational

Thinking and imagination is germane – all innovation begins with an idea, a consideration, a suggestion, that generates possibilities where none had previously existed.

- it's like new, inspiring, creative, that kind of stuff (host staff)
- it's coming up with new and fresh ideas (host staff)
- about being a little bit strategic and worker smarter and not harder (RTO staff)
- being able to think of an idea for something that's required (host staff)
- coming up with new ideas and new ways of doing things, a new perspective on things (RTO staff)

Market-oriented

Innovation is about understanding client/ customer/market needs and coming up with a solution or product that satisfies needs or is taken up by the market.

- something which would be saleable for a customer out there which is good for the company (host staff)
- it's being able to bring an invention into fruition, into practice, into market successfully (student)
- it's about customising the products and the services, to the customer (RTO staff)

Integrated

Innovation is a resource rich practice that requires collaborative effort and integrated competencies to ensure the accomplishment of successful change in any and all aspects of work, learning and business.

- coming up with solutions to problems, solutions that haven't been thought of before (host staff)
- making improvements upon many different systems to get something different, productive (host staff)
- well I suppose we innovate all of the time .. people just ring us up with a problem. So we're constantly - we're problem solvers (host staff)
- a collaborative effort. It was a group of many people who worked together (RTO staff)

Considerations

Conceptions of innovation 'pulse' within a range of tension fields or domains – for example:

- Site: the local and the immediate – What is familiar and routine in one setting can be innovative in another (e.g. situated innovation)
- Source: the internal/external; top down/bottom up – Where ideas, knowledge and altered practice originate shapes innovation recognition and acceptance (e.g. worker-driven, student led, management initiated, acquisition innovation)
- Orientation: purpose and direction – Who and what benefits from change influences understandings of innovation (e.g. market oriented, systems focused, talent development innovation)
- Realisation: the embryonic and the conclusive – Innovation can be identified in the full range of developmental and production stages (e.g. concept, design, planned, process innovation)
- Substantiation: the notion and the thing – What can be done and how it is accomplished are both separate and the same (e.g. disruptive, organic, experiential innovation)

Distinction: The new, unique and wonderful and the modified material or varied response – Originality and impact are significant criteria (e.g. Incremental, radical innovation)

References

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